

REPORT

ON

NATIVE PAPERS IN BENGAL

FOR THE

Week ending the 22nd August 1903.

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URIYA PAPERS.

Nil.

ASSAM PAPERS.

Nil.

II.—HOME ADMINISTRATION.

(a)—Police.

THE *Kasipur Nivasi* [Barisal] of the 12th August publishes the following from an anonymous letter, purporting to be written on behalf of the inhabitants of the villages of Kirtipasa, Tarpasa, Govindadhabal, Runshi and Ramanathpur:—

KASIPUR NIVASI,
Aug. 12th, 1903.

Theft in certain villages in the Backergunge district.

For the last four or five months thefts have been very frequent. Not a single case out of more than forty cases of theft has been traced by the police, although information was given each time. The *budmashes* now openly carry away cattle, etc., and threaten to burn down the houses of those who try to trace them. People cannot live in peace in these villages.

2. The *Sanjivani* [Calcutta] of the 13th August publishes the following reports from correspondents:—

SANJIVANI,
Aug. 13th, 1903.

Oppressiveness of the chaukidari-tax.

Kujipukur, Lallpur, Rajshahi.—The oppressiveness of the chaukidari-tax has greatly increased at Kujipukur, a village in thana Lallpur, in the Rajshahi district. The dafadar does nothing whatever, and yet he gets Rs. 6 per month. The collecting panchayet does whatever he pleases, and no one is allowed to look into the accounts. A few cases of oppression and unjust assessment are given below:—

- (1) Ulfa Bewa, aged about 50 years, extremely poor and worn out with disease. Her *badna* (water-pot) was sold by auction to realise her chaukidari-tax.
- (2) Bhuban Bewa. Has 5 or 6 *bighas* of land and 8 or 9 dependants. Her tax has been increased from As. 6 to Re. 1-4.
- (3) Inu Mandal. Tax increased from As. 14 to Rs. 2.
- (4) Raban Pramanik, a day-labourer, aged 56. Unable to work. Tax increased from As. 9 to As. 14.
- (5) Khidir Mandal, a day-labourer. Tax increased from As. 7 to As. 13.
- (6) Durlav Mandal, a day-labourer, aged about 65 years. Unable to work. Has 4 dependants. Tax increased from As. 10 to As. 14.
- (7) Maddu Bewa. Extremely poor. Has no means of livelihood except a cow. Tax increased from As. 9 to Re. 1-4.
- (8) Chhayebulla Pramanik, a day-labourer. Tax increased from As. 9 to As. 14.
- (9) Sukur Karikar, a weaver. Has 10 or 12 dependants. Tax increased from Re. 1 to Rs. 2-8.
- (10) Fakir Pramanik. Very poor. Has 5 or 6 dependants. Tax increased from As. 9 to Re. 1.
- (11) Hafez Mandal. A day-labourer. Tax increased from As. 9 to Re. 1.
- (12) Badaraddi Pramanik, a day-labourer. Tax increased from As. 12 to Re. 1-2.
- (13) Jahiruddin Pramanik. Greatly in debt. Tax increased from As. 12 to Re. 1-8.
- (14) Chhumiraddin Pramanik. Greatly in debt. Tax increased from As. 12 to Re. 1-8.
- (15) Arfa Bewa. Maintains herself by husking paddy. Tax increased from As. 6 to As. 12.
- (16) Sifat Pramanik, a day-labourer. Very poor. Tax increased from As. 6 to As. 10.
- (17) Khudu Bewa. Very poor. Maintains herself by husking paddy. Worn out with disease. Her *lota* was about to be sold by auction. She paid the tax by borrowing.

3. Referring to the suspicious death of Syama, a prostitute of Binnafoir Bazar in the Tangail subdivision of the Mymensingh district, a correspondent writes to the same paper as follows:—

SANJIVANI.

Failure of the police in investigating a case of suspicious death in Mymensingh.

Police head-constable Akhil Chandra Sarkar failed to fish out the dead body of Syama from the water. As the current is

now very strong, and great precautions were taken in throwing the body into the water, there is little chance of recovering it. Babu Kripanath Chaudhuri, the Senior Sub-Inspector of Police, who went to the place of occurrence on the 2nd August, returned to Tangail after a brief stay without doing anything. As the circumstances were clearly suspicious, the Sub-Inspector ought to have been careful when he first took down the woman's deposition a few days before her death, and not to have been satisfied with her statement that the injuries were caused by a fall. The failure of the police enquiry in this case must be attributed to neglect on the part of Babu Kripanath Chaudhuri.

The *budmashes* have made the life of the inhabitants of Binnafoir and other villages miserable, and unless a check is put upon them, their number and their atrocities will continue to increase.

HITAVADI,
Aug. 14th, 1903.

4. The *Hitavadi* [Calcutta] of the 14th August complains of the great prevalence of theft and *budmashi* at Boalmari, Natudaha, Nadia district. The village chaukidars are of no use in preventing crime. They are good only for committing *zulm* on the villagers for the chaukidari-tax. The attention of the District Superintendent of Police is drawn to the matter.

BANGAVASI,
Aug. 15th, 1903.

5. Babu Ambikacharan Gupta, an inhabitant of Bhangamora, in the Hooghly district, writes to the *Bangavasi* [Calcutta] of the 15th August, pointing out what he considers to be defects in the chaukidari system:—

(1) At the last revision of the Chaukidari Act, various proposals were made for the appointment of chaukidars. Government was anxious to invest the police with that power. But certain members of the Council successfully opposed the measure. The law provided that the Committee of Panchayets should first nominate the chaukidars, and then the District Magistrate should sanction their nomination. But chaukidars are not appointed according to this method. The panchayets fear to offend the police by acting against their wishes, and police officers generally are ignorant of the law. In the Hooghly district a case has occurred, the effect of which has been that a chaukidar has not yet got his appointment letter. Sometimes the collecting panchayet, in co-operation with the police, appoints chaukidars against the wishes of the villagers. The District Magistrate, when informed of this, takes no notice. Such appointments are most unpleasant.

(2) The District Magistrate of Hooghly issued an order some months ago, that when a chaukidar omits or neglects to give information to the thana of births and deaths, a member of the Panchayet Committee should himself go and supply the information to the thana. Such a revolting order deters respectable people from accepting the posts of panchayets.

(3) In spite of the stringent rules introduced for the regular payment of salaries to chaukidars, the payments that are made in the presence of officers are in some cases false. The money immediately after payment returns to its original place.

(4) A perusal of the Chaukidari Act will show that the duties of chaukidars and panchayets and their relations with the police are not properly fixed. They are merely required to give certain information to the thana.

(5) The chaukidars in many cases do not go out on their rounds at night. They are often found to do the private work of the collecting panchayets. On the parade day they have to do the private work of the Sub-Inspectors and other officers at the thana. There are circulars and strict orders prohibiting this practice. Enquiries ought to be made from time to time to ascertain whether these orders are observed in practice.

(6) Although under the law the police are not empowered to appoint chaukidars and panchayets, in practice, however, it is the police who appoint them. The Magistrate always approves what the police do in this matter.

(7) Chaukidars are very seldom, if ever, rewarded for good work.

(8) The chaukidari *chakran* lands should be returned to the chaukidars of Bengal on fair and equitable rates of rent.

(9) The dafadars are entrusted with powers which are very liable to be misused, considering that these men come from the lower classes,

6. The *Dacca Prakas* [Dacca] of the 17th August complains that prostitutes occupy most of the two-storied buildings in the one broad street that is in the Dacca town. This street is the most frequented thoroughfare in the town, and the immoral influence exercised over teachers and students by the women of ill-fame is beyond all description. It is to be regretted that there is none in Dacca willing to take notice of this state of things. Dacca might well profit by the example of Calcutta; but alas! she has always chosen to remain benighted.

DACCA PRAKAS,
Aug. 17th, 1903.

7. A correspondent of the *Tripura Hitaishi* [Tippera] of the 18th August says that about four months ago a number of the inhabitants of the Satmarha village within the Bramanbaria subdivision of the Tippera district petitioned the Subdivisional Officer for an enquiry into the conduct of a number of *budmashes* in the village. The petition was sent to the Nabinagar thana for enquiry. But a Sub-Inspector of the thana bearing a grudge against the villagers and having great intimacy with one of the leaders of the *budmashes*, no enquiry has as yet been made on the petition. The *budmashes* are, in the meantime, trying their best to harass the petitioners. A second petition was made, but with no better effect. Emboldened by such conduct on the part of the police, the *budmashes* are making conspiracies for being revenged against the petitioners. The villagers are living in a very uneasy state of mind. If the authorities do not take early steps in the matter, a serious occurrence will soon take place in the village.

TRIPURA HITAIISHI,
Aug. 18th, 1903.

8. A correspondent writes to the *Anusandhan* [Calcutta] of the 19th August as follows:—
It is well known that ruffians called *gundas* infest the streets of Calcutta at night. Even the Harrison Road is not free from them, where the electric lamps go out almost every night, and people are robbed in the darkness. But the *gundas* commit far greater atrocities at Howrah. Last Saturday night, a young man named Ramchandra Sani was severely beaten and robbed by a *budmash* on the road leading to the Howrah Courts. The *paharawallahs* were, as usual, conspicuous by their absence.

ANUSANDHAN,
Aug. 19th, 1903.

9. Thanks to the *sebayets* of Kalighat and the Kalighat police, says the *Pratijna* [Calcutta] of the 19th August, strenuous efforts are being made to save people going to the place on pilgrimage from being harassed, persecuted, and oppressed by able-bodied beggars, *budmashes*, etc. The police has promulgated the orders concerning the premises which are rented out to pilgrims. But the second of these rules, which is that "no person shall be boarded or lodged therein," will work more inconvenience and hardship than good to them. The most meritorious form of worship of the goddess Kali is performed after 10 P.M., after a whole day's fasting, and pilgrims desiring to perform it will be greatly inconvenienced by the enforcement of the rule. Besides this, pilgrims coming from distant places are obliged either from fatigue or for want of time or better accommodation to spend nights in hired premises near the *mandir*; and they have sometimes to wait there for the celebration of religious festivals. Then there are missing of trains, and other mishaps which prevent pilgrims from leaving the place on the desired days. In such and other cases the above rule will cause great hardship.

PRATIJNA,
Aug. 19th, 1903.

(b)—Working of the Courts.

10. The *Murshidabad Hitaishi* [Murshidabad] of the 12th August complains that in the Berhampore Criminal Court the mukhtars have no house or room for their use as a Bar Library, and the consequent inconvenience is great. The mukhtars have all along tried their best to remove this inconvenience, but unfortunately their attempts have hitherto ended in failure. They may be permitted the use of a room in the Court building either free or on rent, as the case may be, or allowed to construct a suitable house for themselves within the Court compound at their own expense. It is to be hoped the District Magistrate, Mr. Carey, will take this matter into his favourable consideration.

MURSHIDABAD
HITAISHI,
Aug. 12th, 1903.

MEDINI BANDHAV,
Aug. 12th, 1903.

11. A correspondent of the *Medini Bandhav* [Midnapore] of the 12th August says that the jurisdiction of the Nandigram Sub-Registry office in the Midnapore district extends over 300 villages, most of which are 17 or 18 miles distant from it. Besides this, the pressure of work in the office is so heavy as to preclude all possibility of finishing the day's work within the day. Sometimes deeds are registered a month after their presentation. Such delay and the trouble of travelling 17 or 18 miles cause the greatest inconvenience and hardship to poor people. To obviate all this, a Sub-Registry office should be established at Nandapore, a village situate at about the centre of the jurisdiction of the Nandigram thana.

The editor says that, what with repeated failures of crops and what with the miseries produced by the Nandigram riot case, the majority of the villagers are in the throes of famine, compelling them to sell, mortgage, etc., their properties in order to save themselves from starvation. No argument is needed to show that arrangements ought to be made for the registration of their deeds as soon as they are presented.

SANJIVANI,
Aug. 13th, 1903.

12. The *Sanjivani* [Calcutta] of the 13th August reports that Mr. Stevenson-Moore, Magistrate of Alipore, while returning to Calcutta in his steam-boat from Naihati on Monday last, saw that a man was drifting away in the current near Kamarhati, in a senseless condition. He immediately jumped into the water and rescued the man, and by nursing and the application of medicines succeeded in resuscitating him. The man stated that he was a passenger by the steamer *Urvasi* belonging to Messrs. Hoare, Miller and Co., and that he fell into the water and then lost his senses. The Magistrate found the *Urvasi* at the Nimtolla ghat and ordered the police to enquire into the matter. It is Englishmen like Mr. Stevenson-Moore that have made the Indians loyal subjects of the British *Raj*.

SANJIVANI.

13. A correspondent writes to the same paper complaining that the Munsif of Pingna, a 'chauki in the Tanjail subdivision of the Mymensingh district, has, without due enquiry, reported to the District Judge that the villages within the jurisdiction of the Ghatail outpost should be included within the Tangail Munsifi. It will be found on enquiry that, excepting the few people who live towards the southern part of the Ghatail outpost, all the inhabitants find it more convenient to go to Pingna than to Tangail. Moreover, when it is remembered that the present number of cases at Pingna, which is much less than that of previous years, is not such as to require the services of an additional Munsif and that not less than 3,200 cases were easily disposed of by one Munsif, during the last seven or eight years, it will be plain that the villages in the Ghatail outpost should not be included in the Tangail Munsifi. It is to be hoped that the worthy District Judge will not allow an injustice to be done to the Pingna Munsifi.

HITAVADI,
Aug 14th, 1903.

14. Referring to the case in which Sergeant Stone of the 72nd Battery, Meerut, was charged with having caused the death of a syce named Gurabuksh, and in which the Chief Justice of the Allahabad High Court has acquitted the accused, the *Hitavadi* [Calcutta] of the 14th August writes as follows:—

Causes are coming into existence which lead the people gradually to lose their faith in English Courts of justice. It is certainly a matter of great regret that the method in which justice is administered in the High Courts is reminding people of the *kazi's* method of the olden time. It is neither praiseworthy for the sovereign nor beneficial to the subject that in this age of peace and enlightenment in India, and in the full vigour of British rule, there should occur such judicial acting as used to mark the *kazi's* proceedings in many parts of the country in which anarchy prevailed during the closing years of Musalman supremacy. The Chief Justice himself sat in the above case and appointed a European jury to help him in deciding it. The trial went on. Devi Sing, Dr. Kedarnath, and three other natives, and Lieutenant Stratton of the Meerut Hospital gave evidence in favour of the prosecution. But Stone said that he had never any quarrel with the deceased Gurabuksh. The Judge and the jury believed what Stone said and disbelieved the dying declaration of the

deceased made in the presence of two Europeans and a Cantonment Magistrate. The learned Government Advocate's arguments also in favour of the prosecution could not shake off from the Court's mind its notion of the case, and the Chief Justice, concurring with the jury, declared the accused person not guilty.

We Indians are uneducated and semi-civilised. In our eyes this decision appears to be like a *kazi's* decision. Specially, when we learn from the *Pioneer* newspaper that "the more serious charges—culpable homicide not amounting to murder and causing grievous hurt—were abandoned by the prosecution on the suggestion of the Chief Justice," we become still more suspicious in the matter. Does any Judge in any civilised country dare make such a request to the prosecution in a case?

How long will the Indians have to put up with such *kazi-like* method of administering justice? Will there not be a remedy for it even in Lord Curzon's time?

15. A correspondent of the same paper says that Maulavi Wajaddin Ahmed, the Settlement Officer of Jalpaiguri, has taken it into his head that the article which some time ago appeared against him in the *Hitavadi* was written by one of his old *amins*, whom he is consequently trying his best to get rid of. Within the last few months he has dismissed three or four of them for such slight offences as were never before known to bring about the dismissal of an *amin*.

HITAVADI,
Aug. 14th, 1903.

16. The *Hitavarta* [Calcutta] of the 16th August has the following:—
A woman named Amiran owned a piece of land measuring about 20 bighas at the Tinsukia junction in Lukshimpur in Assam. Out of this, about 11 bighas were acquired by the Education Department in 1900. But the land acquired having proved unsuitable for the purpose for which it had been taken, it was not occupied by the Education Department. The land thus remained in the occupation of Amiran. A European doctor having heard how matters stood in respect of the above land, applied to the local Deputy Commissioner for a settlement of it with him, and subsequently the said Amiran also applied for such settlement on her own behalf. The Deputy Commissioner rejected the application of Amiran, and gave the said Doctor a *patta* for the land and instructed him to take possession by force. Amiran being thus ousted from her land, brought a criminal case against the said Doctor and his men, and the Doctor, in his turn, brought a cross-case against her and her daughter. The Deputy Commissioner struck off the complaint of Amiran against the Doctor and his men, and fined her Rs. 10 on the charge brought against her by the Doctor.

HITAVARTA,
Aug. 16th, 1903.

17. The same paper says that in the case of Babu Chandra Kumar Agarwallah against a European tea-planter in the Court of the Deputy Commissioner of Dibrugarh in Assam, the trying officer showed great partiality to the European planter. Chandra Babu was at last compelled to seek the protection of the Calcutta High Court.

HITAVARTA.

18. The same paper says that a competent *hakim* should be appointed as the proposed Additional Presidency Magistrate of Calcutta. If a nominee of the Chamber of Commerce is selected for the post, that nominee will be a helpless tool in the hands of the European merchants. Such is generally the case nowadays. We do not think a third Presidency Magistrate necessary for the present. If Government, however, is bent upon having an Additional Presidency Magistrate, its choice should fall upon a man of an independent character.

HITAVARTA.

(d).—Education.

19. The *Sanjivani* [Calcutta] of the 13th August writes as follows:—
At the desire of the late Lieutenant-Governor, Sir John Woodburn, and his subordinate, Mr. Pedler, the new scheme of education has been introduced into all schools in Bengal—high, middle, and primary. Our object is to draw the attention of Government to the serious mischief which has been caused

SANJIVANI,
Aug. 13th, 1903.

Educational reform or educational confusion?

to the entire province by the manner in which that scheme has been introduced. It is our firm belief that in their eagerness to enforce their pet scheme during their tenure of office, neither Sir John Woodburn nor Mr. Pedler had time to think of the harm it would do to many hundreds of thousands of boys. One shudders even to think of the trouble and mischief that Government has caused to the entire province in its endeavour to reform its educational system. Teachers and boys in all sorts of schools are in great trouble, and this is due not so much to the system of education introduced as to the rashness displayed by Government in its introduction.

This new system of education has been imported from Europe. But there is no doubt that for want of that expenditure and those arrangements which have rendered that system a success in Europe, it will do only mischief in this country. According to the new scheme, the teaching in the infant classes will have to be conducted according to the Kindergarten system. In Europe children of from three to five years of age are taught by motherly lady teachers, by means of that system, object-lessons, as well as the construction of things of various shapes, with sticks, paper, &c. In Europe, for the infant class alone, there are kept so many as five or six experienced lady teachers. In our country, not to speak of lady teachers, a primary school cannot maintain more than one male teacher. Besides, children here do not enter school at the age to which the Kindergarten system is most suited. Again, the Sunni sect among the Muhammadan community are opposed to teaching which is accompanied by singing. In these circumstances, the Kindergarten system is not suited to our country. Where shall we find in this country the requisite number of lady teachers as well as the money which will be required to maintain them?

In the new scheme, arrangements have been made for the gradual teaching of object-lessons, Botany, Zoology, Chemistry, Physics, Agriculture, Hygiene, &c., according to the Kindergarten system. It is our belief, however, that among the teachers in our high, middle, and primary schools hardly one in a hundred knows anything of Science, and it is easy to see whether it would be good for the country to entrust such men with the task of teaching Science. At present, in the high schools, only a smattering of Science is taught in the Entrance class, and there is no objection to entrusting the Head-Masters of Entrance schools with the teaching of that amount of Science. Passed students of the normal schools were competent to teach the amount of Science that had been so long taught in the middle schools. But we know that none of these teachers taught Science as it should be taught, that is to say, with the accompaniment of experiments. It was want of money, no doubt, that stood in the way of the teaching of Science with the help of experiments. If, in spite of a knowledge of Science, these teachers are unable to teach it properly for want of money, there can be no doubt that *gurus* innocent of Science will teach Science Primers just as they teach Literature Primers, that is to say, by means of synonyms. The object of the new scheme of education will thus be completely defeated. In its frantic zeal for the teaching of Science, Government has appointed Science Readers in Bengali, prepared by English publishers like Messrs. Macmillan & Co., as text-books, and thereby knocked the Bengali language on the head. The books under the new scheme approved by Government betray its inexperience. Formerly, in the *pathshalas*, the boys, after finishing the first and second alphabet books, read an easy Reader like "Sisusiksha," Part III, and then proceeded to study the Reader appointed for the Lower Primary examination. But under the present arrangements, as soon as they have finished the alphabet and spelling-book, they will be required to study Science Readers containing a large number of hard words. Complaints are reaching us from many places that this arrangement has proved a great hardship to juvenile students.

Be that as it may, it is mainly for two reasons that the new scheme is proving so injurious to the country. The first of these reasons is that there is an entire lack of teachers competent to teach according to the new scheme, and the second is that the scheme, instead of being introduced by slow degrees from the lowest class, has been introduced all at once in all the classes.

When Sir George Campbell introduced his novel scheme of primary education, he introduced it gradually by having the old teachers trained in the

new methods. And yet Sir George's scheme was not quite new to this province. But the scheme which has been introduced from this year into all the classes of our schools is quite new to our province. And yet Government has put the cart before the horse. A single teacher has not yet been trained, and yet all schools must send students from 1904 to examinations to be conducted under the new scheme. What a strange arrangement! Under the arrangements made by Government to train teachers in the new methods, it will take probably from 10 to 15 years to prepare the required number of teachers. Teachers for high and middle schools and Head-Masters of *guru*-training schools will be trained in the normal schools, while *pathsala* teachers will be trained in the *guru*-training school. But only 60 to 70 passed teachers come out every year from normal schools in Bengal, and of these, five or six only pass in Drawing. A *guru*-training school is to be established in every subdivision, and this school will prepare four or five teachers every two years. Attempts have been made to establish such schools from last year, but three causes have hitherto stood in the way of their establishment. Firstly, only passed students of the normal schools possess the qualifications required in the Head-Masters of such schools, and the number of such passed students is very small. Secondly, the salary fixed by Mr. Pedler for such Head-Masters, namely, Rs. 9 in addition to any fees that may be realised from the students, is too small to attract really intelligent people. Thirdly, the *gurus* of neighbouring *pathsalas* to be trained in such schools are required to pay a school-fee of Rs. 3 per month for two years. Must the families of these poor *gurus*, we ask, then starve for two mortal years? Mr. Pedler has devised another cheap method of training the *gurus* in the new methods. In obedience to his order, Deputy Inspectors and Sub-Inspectors of Schools are attending *guru*-training schools for five or six weeks to learn the new method, so that they, in their turn, may train the *gurus* under them in those methods. It is easy to imagine how long it must take the ignorant and uncultured *gurus* to master a system to acquire only a general knowledge of which it will be necessary for educated people like Deputy Inspectors and Sub-Inspectors of Schools to devote five or six weeks. And what training in these methods can be expected to be imparted to the *gurus* by these Inspectors in the course of two or of three visits in a year?

Now for an explanation of what we mean by a sudden introduction of the system. So long Science was taught from the second class upwards, Geometry and Drawing from the fourth class upwards, and History from the fifth class upwards in Entrance schools. Under the present system Science and Drawing are being taught from section (b) of the eighth class upwards, and History and Geometry from section (b) of the seventh class upwards in those schools. Formerly decimal fractions were taught in the fifth class; now the whole of Arithmetic must be finished in the sixth class. The overwhelming pressure thus put upon students of tender years is being painfully felt by teachers and guardians as well as by the students themselves. A boy who read the "First Book of Reading" and the "Bodhodaya" and worked out simple additions and subtractions only the year before, will, on his promotion to the seventh class, read, in one year, half of the Upper Primary Science Reader, of practical Geometry and of Geography and the History of Bengal, as well as Arithmetic up to fractions, and Drawing. The boy who read only the year before an English Reader and a Bengali Reader like "Akhyamanjari," worked out sums up to reduction, and learnt only the definitions of Geography, will now, on his promotion to the sixth class, read, in one year, extracts from a book like "Meghnadbadh," History of India, half of General and Physical Geography, Practical Geometry and Mensuration, the Middle Science Reader, Arithmetic up to the square root, and free-hand Drawing.

Mr. Pedler has appointed Mr. Havell's Drawing Books, Nos. I, II, and III, for the Lower Primary, Upper Primary, and Middle examinations respectively. People will laugh to hear that in the Drawing Book appointed for the Lower Primary examination there are given samples of drawing harder than any to be found in the text-book in that subject appointed for the Entrance examination. Competent drawing teachers cannot be found in the province, and yet, strangely enough, students are required to learn Drawing of a very difficult character. What is still more strange is that students who have

never learnt Drawing are being compelled to pass examinations in that subject according to the second, fourth or even sixth standard. Again, the Lower Primary, the Upper Primary, and the Middle Science Readers are so written that in order to comprehend the third it is necessary to have mastered the two first, and to comprehend the second it is necessary to have mastered the first. To require, therefore, those who have never read the Lower Primary Science Reader to pass an examination in either the Upper Primary or the Middle Science Reader is really an act of oppression. On the one hand, there is a total lack in all schools—high, middle or primary—of competent teachers to teach Kindergarten, Object-lessons, Drawing, Drill, and Science, and on the other, an oppressively heavy burden has been laid on all students who have just come out of their infancy. On the one hand, the Director is whipping the Inspector, the Inspector is whipping the Deputy Inspector, the Deputy Inspector is whipping the Sub-Inspector, and the Sub-Inspector is whipping the teachers to enforce the new system with the least possible delay, while on the other, the juvenile students are being crushed under the heavy load that has been laid upon them. Educated fathers feel extremely distressed to see the crushing burden thus imposed upon their sons. If Government makes an impartial enquiry, it will see that this trouble is being felt all over the province. Nay, we are bold enough to say that if, not making such an enquiry, Government only carefully considers these arrangements of the Education Department, it will see that Mr. Pedler has set about accomplishing a wholly impossible task.

Lord Curzon and his educational minister, Mr. Orange, are bent upon educational reform. We therefore draw their attention to these matters in the hope that they will remedy the evil. We are not opposed to the new scheme. We are, on the contrary, of opinion that by proper expenditure and judicious management, it may be made productive of great blessings and advantages. We mention below the arrangements which we think necessary for a successful working of the scheme:—

(1) Let a higher class training college be established without delay; and let none but passed students of that college be appointed as Deputy Inspectors or Sub-Inspectors of Schools, or as Head-Masters of Entrance schools.

(2) Let arrangements be made for the preparation of at least 100 competent teachers every year by the normal schools.

(3) Let a *guru*-training school be established in each subdivision, and let eight *gurus* be induced to read there by the grant of a monthly scholarship of at least Rs. 8 each, and eight other students by the grant of a monthly scholarship of at least Rs. 9 each. The Head-Masters of these schools must be passed students of normal schools and trained in the new methods. These Head-Masters should be allowed a salary of at least Rs. 20. The students, *gurus*, and others should be lodged in quarters adjoining the school-house. When the total number of teachers required by a subdivision has been prepared by the local *guru*-training school, the number of paid students may be reduced to five or six. These schools should be established as permanent institutions like the normal schools. Government may, in our opinion, save expenditure by converting the model schools maintained by itself or the District Boards into *guru*-training schools.

(4) When at least 20 per cent. of the total number of teachers required in a subdivision have been prepared by the local *guru*-training school, the new scheme should first be introduced, in that subdivision, into the schools of the teachers thus trained in the new methods; otherwise trouble and confusion will be certain.

(5) So long as the teachers are not prepared, that is to say, for the next five or six years, the introduction of the new scheme should be postponed.

(6) When the time is ripe for the introduction of the new scheme, it should be introduced by degrees, beginning with the lowest class.

Our recommendations will prove expensive in the carrying out. But nothing good can be had without expenditure. A cheap thing is always a bad thing. We bring to the notice of Lord Curzon, who is a man of action, and of Mr. Orange, who is a cool-headed man, the great trouble and confusion into which the Bengal Government and its subordinate, Mr. Pedler, have thrown the province by their endeavour to introduce, at a small cost, a highly expen-

sive educational scheme. For a long time Government was inattentive to the educational improvement of the country. It was only last year that Lord Curzon sanctioned an additional grant of 10 lakhs of rupees for educational reforms. But niggardly as it is, the Bengal Government has saved four or five lakhs out of that sum, hoping to carry out a great scheme at a small cost by means of *zubberdust*. The grant has been renewed this year also. But unless Lord Curzon enquires carefully into the present confusion in educational matters in Bengal, and unless he personally applies a remedy, we cannot hope for any good to the country from this renewed grant. For some years past Bengal has been pestered by the indiscretion and fickleness of mind displayed in educational matters by Mr. Pedler and the Bengal Government as advised by Mr. Pedler. An order is passed to-day that English should not be taught in any class below the third class in a middle English school. But to-morrow we see another order passed directing that English should be taught from the fourth class upwards of such a school. To-day an order is passed that English should be taught in a lower primary school, and the very next day that order is countermanded. We, too, are in favour of teaching the students of Entrance schools all subjects but English through the medium of the vernacular. But the subjects of study should by no means be multiplied. And if the subjects must be multiplied, let that be done gradually, beginning with the lowest class. The effects of Mr. Pedler's indiscreet haste in enforcing the new scheme are already but too manifest everywhere. Already parents are withdrawing their sons from primary schools and sending them to distant English schools. In some primary schools English is being taught in extra hours in the morning or in the evening to satisfy the guardians of the students, who would otherwise withdraw their wards. The guardians of the lower students in Entrance schools, too, view with alarm the new burden placed upon their sons—a burden which they fear will shatter the health of their boys and interfere with their success in examinations. Intelligent guardians are therefore removing their sons to unaided institutions, in which the new scheme has not yet been enforced, or are having them taught at home with a view to admitting them at once into the fourth or a higher class of an Entrance school. As for the teachers of aided English schools, they are quite at a loss for a remedy against this educational evil.

20. The *Dacca Gazette* [Dacca] of the 17th August has the following communicated article in its English columns:—

Mr. Pedler's new scheme.

I feel compelled to have recourse to public print in connection with a subject of momentous importance—public education. The *furor* of agitation over this subject has now apparently subsided. Despite this apparent indifference, I think it worth my while to set up that agitation once more in consideration of the gravity of the subject. Your readers are all aware of the system of education brought into vogue by Mr. Pedler in our higher English schools. Of course, Mr. Pedler was actuated by an intelligent and benevolent motive to give a sounder and better education based on the English system to the boys of our country. But time, circumstances, and resources of this country are not, I think, favourable for its growth and propagation. What is congenial to the European soil may not be so to a totally different soil. That a system of education ingrafted into a soil where there are no sufficient resources for its development would end in failure, is a foregone conclusion. Professor G. C. Bose's "*Bijnan Reader*" has been prescribed as a text-book in the lower classes of higher English schools. The books prescribed by Mr. Pedler have not only been introduced in Government schools, but in the aided institutions too. This "*Bijnan Reader*," as the title indicates, contains lessons based purely on scientific subjects. It puzzles me to understand how theories on reflection and refraction of light, exposition of the nervous system, subjects on botany and mensuration can find their way into the tender brains of children. Again, they have to read subjects such as specific gravity, law of gravitation, etc. What will the boys of the 6th class understand of pistils and stamens, their connection with the growth of plants? Some of the technical terms of botany are even entirely unheard of by those young learners. The reader will be further surprised to hear that these tender boys have also to read something about Psychology. The trans.

DACCA GAZETTE,
Aug. 17th, 1903.

mission of a sensation through the afferent nerves to the brain and the response coming through the innervation of the motor nerve is a subject for the B.A. students. Is this severe test also to apply to the case of these boys?

The nervous system of these boys has not reached the requisite development to grasp such stiff and complicated subjects. How these boys will understand subjects of a nature specified above surpasses human conception. This system of education may well obtain in England, for the students there have got well-equipped laboratories and museums. But here in India few schools have funds enough to provide for a laboratory. Without a laboratory and the necessary appliances this Kindergarten system is merely a farce. To speak of the generation and change of colours of flowers and leaves without experiment, would sound to the boys something like a story from fairy land. To speak of the refraction of light without showing it by experiment, would be simply confounding and befooling the boys. "Suppose this is a concave mirror" is arrant nonsense. This will practically be the case in many schools under Mr. Pedler's new system. To plunge the boys in heaps of subjects would be further blunting their intellect rather than facilitating the way for acquiring thorough knowledge. If the energies of these little boys are frittered away at this period and their nervous vigour gives way under the pressure of such a stupendous mass of studies, what hope is there of their going in for higher examinations? They are to be scientists, botanists, and philosophers, etc., all simultaneously and the results can better be imagined than described. Again, the students of the 7th class have to read a treatise on the history of India. They do not understand a whit of the subject, and on examining many of them, I have found that they steer clear of their difficulty by getting everything by heart. Even some of the teachers themselves do not understand these difficult subjects, and the most ludicrous part of the affair is that they often find themselves in a nice fix when they are asked to explain them. As a necessary consequence they try their utmost to extricate themselves out of the difficult position by various excuses and tricks, and drive some nonsense home into the heads of these boys. The ignorant boys unscrupulously accept what is told by their teacher. This is a fact which I myself have witnessed. Lastly, Mr. Editor, our University is turning out many graduates every year, shattered in mind and body. If such a hard pressure is put upon the little and tender boys, assuredly their future prospects will be blighted and they will be totally incapacitated for higher education. What earthly benefit would accrue by manufacturing so many intellectual pigmies? These are facts which cannot and should not be lost sight of in introducing an innovation in matters of public education in a country like India.

(e)—Local Self-Government and Municipal Administration.

SRI SRI VISHNU
PRIYA-O-
ANANDA BAZAR
PATRIKA,
Aug. 12th, 1903.

21. The *Sri Sri Vishnu Priya-o-Ananda Bazar Patrika* [Calcutta] of the

Proposed supply of drinking
water in the Murshidabad district.

12th August says that a notice has been issued by the District Board of Murshidabad to the effect that the Board will undertake to sink wells in

those villages in which there is want of drinking water. The cost of each well will be about Rs. 400, half of which the villagers must subscribe. This no doubt is a good proposal. But it will be impossible for most of the villages to subscribe Rs. 200 at the present time, as most of them are faring very badly.

HITAVADI,
Aug. 14th, 1903.

22. The *Hitavadi* [Calcutta] of the 14th August says that in none of the

A ferry complaint.

three ferry-ghats under the Dinajpur Municipality are there waiting-rooms for passengers. Besides

this, the full number of ferry boats, two for carrying men and two for carrying animals, is not kept in any of the ghats, and there are no arrangements for lighting the boats at night. All this causes great inconvenience and hardship to the local public.

HITAVADI,

23. The same paper speaks of the frequency of the complaints against

The Mymensingh Vaccination
Department.

the officers of the Mymensingh Vaccination Department. A correspondent says that allured by bribes, they appoint unlettered men as vaccinators,

to the great inconvenience of the public. The District Inspector of Vaccina-

tion has recently been sentenced to undergo one year's rigorous imprisonment and pay a fine of Rs. 200 for having taken bribes. It is hoped that the authorities will henceforth keep a sharp eye on these corrupt officers.

24. The same paper says that there are ferry arrangements at only two places on the Damodar river along the road between the Panagarh railway station and Bankura.

A ferry complaint.

Such arrangements should be made at least in one other place along the road. Besides this, the cupidity and neglect of the ferry *ijardar* cause grave inconvenience to ferry passengers. Sometimes they are wetted and besmeared with mud, sometimes they have to wait for ferry boats for a long time, &c. The attention of the District Magistrate of Bankura is drawn to the matter.

25. The Bankura Municipality, says the *Bankura Darpan* [Bankura] of the 16th August, has decided to excavate a tank at Rathtala at one end of the Bankura town.

The proposed excavation of a tank in Bankura.

The water scarcity at the other end of the town is not less severe than that at Rathtala. The Municipality should therefore excavate a tank at the other end also. A single tank at the centre of the town may serve the purpose of the whole town, but that will be very costly. The writer therefore proposes that, instead of excavating a tank at one end of the town, the Municipality should excavate four deep wells at four different places with machines for drawing water therefrom.

26. The *Bikas* [Barisal] of the 18th August draws the attention of the authorities to the unsatisfactory working of the Perozpur Municipality in the Backergunge district.

The Perozpur Municipality in the Backergunge district.

Its roads are in an extremely bad condition, the condition of the road along the bank of the khal which passes through the Perozpur town being deplorable. The Subdivisional Officer, who is the Chairman of the Municipality, has probably no time to look after municipal matters.

27. The *People and Prativasi* [Calcutta] of the 19th August has the following in its English columns:—

Natives on the Calcutta Municipal Board.

The Calcutta Municipality has been thoroughly Europeanised. The native noodles have still the privilege of putting in their appearance in the Corporation meetings, but they come and go and go and come. Their presence does not in the least influence the decision of the Calcutta Corporation. But still they must be Commissioners because they cannot throw away the opportunity of serving their country. Those who put forward this argument as a defence of their once more seeking to sit on the changed Municipal Board owe us an explanation as to why they could not secure the appointment of Babu Jogendra Nath Bose as the License Officer of the Calcutta Corporation. The claim of this gentleman to the office in question is undisputed, but it has been shelved away only because his countrymen have no longer got any influence there. We once more ask what the native Commissioners are there for. The rigour of the municipal baliff is out of all proportion to the comforts and conveniences provided to the rate-payers, the able native officers are being ousted from the lucrative and responsible offices, the conveniences of the rate-payers of the northern division are being deliberately ignored. It is high time we were spared the humiliation of being insulted and slighted by a Corporation which claims to be self-governing. When a body of Europeans come to a decision adverse to our interests we do not feel it so much, we take it as a matter of course, but when there is a native element in the deliberative body we smart under the defeat. It is for this reason that we are opposed to natives seeking a seat on the new Corporation.

(g)—Railways and communications, including canals and irrigation.

28. The *Hitavadi* [Calcutta] of the 14th August publishes the following railway complaints:—

Railway complaints.

(1) Fanibhusan Banerji, Darbhanga, says that recently Messrs. Behari Lal Dan and Company, of Calcutta, sent two canisters of cocoa-nut oil to Darbhanga, addressed to Banerji and Company of the town. After the consignment was taken delivery of from the Darbhanga railway station, it was found that one of the canisters contained kerosene oil instead of

HITAVADI,
Aug. 14th, 1903.

BANKURA DARPAN,
Aug. 16th, 1903.

BIKAS,
Aug. 18th, 1903.

PEOPLE AND
PRATIVASI,
Aug. 19th, 1903.

HITAVADI,
Aug. 14th, 1903.

cocoa-nut oil. On the same day, the Engineer *sahib* of Darbhanga received a consignment of 36 canisters of kerosene oil, one of which was found to be empty, smelling of cocoa-nut oil, and having a hole at its bottom. It was clear that the crafty thief had taken out the cocoa-nut oil through the hole, put the empty canister in the Engineer's consignment, and filled the place of the cocoa-nut oil canister with one of the kerosene canisters. In such cases of theft the railway authorities make only sham enquiries. But is there no way of tracing the thieves?

(2) Babu Mamaheswara Samanta, No. 13, Darpa Narayan Tagore's Street, Calcutta, says, that at 1 P.M. on the 24th July last, at the Howrah station on the East Indian Railway, Babu Tinkari Chatterji, an inhabitant of the Raynagar village under the Rayna Post Office, in the Burdwan district, and a contractor at Madhupur, requested him to see the date of his ticket, saying that although he had bought it a few minutes before, he had been prevented from travelling with it on the ground that it bore the previous day's date. The correspondent saw that the ticket really bore the previous day's date, and lent him the price of another ticket, as the deceived man had no money left with him. The number of the former ticket was 0079 and was from Howrah to Jamtara.

(3) Babu Hemanta Kumar Chaudhuri, Dacca, says that on the night of the 23rd July last, Babu Ashutosh Maitra, the signaller of the Sinjani station on the M. G. Railway, behaved with him in a very ungentlemanly manner and threatened to hand him over to the police, because he was standing with his wife in a corner of a verandah of the station room. He had come by the 14-down mail train, and had been prevented from going out by the great rush of passengers at the exit gate, and the want of a waiting-room for females had compelled him to wait in the verandah till the rush should decrease. But threatened by the signaller, he was obliged to make his way through the crowd with his wife, a circumstance which gave him great pain.

(4) A correspondent says that the waiting-room for third class passengers at the Keul station is open on all sides. Last year a man died of cold in it. There is no separate waiting-room for native women. The down platform is open on all sides. The station latrine is 4 minutes' walk from the station, and trains wait at the station for only 15 minutes. This prevents people from using it.

HITAVADI,
Aug. 14th, 1908.

29. The same paper says that the closing of the lock-gate across the Pratapkhali khal within the Tamluk subdivision of the Midnapore district has kept up a severe water scarcity in nearly 80 villages. The Deputy Magistrate of Tamluk was petitioned by the villagers in this matter, but he sent the petition to the District Collector saying that he himself had no power to act in the matter. Nothing further has as yet been heard in the matter.

[Sup] HITAVADI.

30. It is a matter of great regret, says the same paper, that the Bombay mail train on the East Indian Railway, which stops at many petty stations, does not stop at such an important station as Baidyanath Junction. Not to speak of pilgrims and residents of Deoghur, litigants from different parts of the subdivision have daily to come to the town, and these people suffer great inconvenience on account of the smallness of the number of trains stopping at Baidyanath. Again, a great inconvenience of the pilgrims can be removed by making the Asensol local train run up to the Keul Junction.

HITAVADI.

31. The same paper says that a number of daily passengers have petitioned for a down train between the first local down train and the Bogra passenger train on the Eastern Bengal State Railway, and that the railway authorities have informed them that if their request is to be complied with, the train which arrives at Sealdah at 10-30 A.M. will have to be abolished. Now, abolition of this train will cause serious inconvenience and loss to a large number of daily passengers, because there will be no down train available within two hours after the train following the Bogra passenger train. It will be unjust to remove the inconvenience of some daily passengers at the cost of others.

Grievances of daily passengers
on the Eastern Bengal State Rail-
way.

Again, there are many trains which do not touch any of the stations between Barrackpore and Sealdah, although these stations supply a larger number of passengers than Barrackpore. The trains should therefore stop at these intermediate stations for at least a minute or two, especially when there is no train available by daily passengers, which touches these stations after 8-15 P.M.

32. Babu Kamakhya Charan Sen Gupta writing from Kalipahari, Burdwan, to the same paper says that coke-merchants suffer great injustice at the hands of the East Indian Railway authorities. Low-sided open trucks are supplied to the Kalipahari and Jherria coal mines for carrying coke, and if any of the trucks is loaded below 272 maunds, the Railway Company realise an undercharge at the rate of 7 pice per maund of deficiency. All trucks loaded in Kalipahari sidings are weighed on the Raniganj weigh-bridge. In this weighing and in thefts committed by railway servants on the way every truck loses nearly 50 maunds of coke before it reaches its destination, causing great loss to the coke-merchant. The rate of fare for coke from Kalipahari to Howrah, Sealdah or Chitpur is 7 pice per maund, or 2 pice more than that for coal. All this shows that the Railway Company is too careful in guarding and advancing its own interests and too negligent in protecting those of the coke-merchants. Formerly some of the big coke-merchants of Sealdah and Chitpur used to get a commission on the fares paid by them. But this has been discontinued from the 17th August last. However that may be, the Railway Company should send covered waggons for carrying coke. A certain coke-merchant of Bali has had to wind up his business owing to loss of coke due to its carriage in open trucks.

HITAVADI,
Aug. 14th, 1903.

33. The *Hitavarta* [Calcutta] of the 16th August is sorry that natives have been excluded from the higher posts in the railway service. In 1879, Government by its Circular No. ¹²⁸/₁₄₄ R.E., dated the 10th November, declared that in the Traffic Department of the Indian railways able natives should be provided with posts of trust and responsibility. But the railway authorities have up to the present moment given no effect to this circular. It is to be hoped that Lord Curzon will direct his attention to the directions contained in the circular.

HITAVARTA,
Aug. 16th, 1903.

34. A correspondent of the *Pratijna* [Calcutta] of the 19th August complains of the extremely bad condition of the road at Rangilabad within the Diamond Harbour subdivision of the 24-Parganas district. Again, the silting up of the *khal* between Magrahat and Diamond Harbour has ruined the agriculture and internal trade of the place. Is the Local Board sleeping over these matters? Where does all the Board's money go?

PRATIJNA,
Aug. 19th, 1903.

(h)—General.

35. The *Jyoti* [Chittagong] of the 13th August says that in spite of the reduction of 8 annas per maund of the salt duty, there has been no reduction in the price of salt in the Chittagong district. It is only the traders who are benefited by the reduction. The agent to M. David & Co. is selling Hamburgh salt at a very cheap price, but here again the traders are the gainers. Poor people are purchasing salt at the old price, i.e., at 1 anna 6 pies per *seer*. It is to be hoped that the authorities will come forward to help the poor in their difficulty.

JYOTI,
Aug. 13th, 1903.

36. Babu Sasibhusan Mitra writes to the *Ratnakar* [Asensol] from Kalipahari as follows:—
Threatened ruin of the coal industry in Bengal. Government has acted most unjustly towards coal-mine owners by levying road-cess upon their income in addition to the usual income-tax. The burden of these two taxes has been too heavy for them. "Road-cess upon income" is a most incongruous phrase, yet the calculation of the cess this year has been characterised by unusual rigour, inasmuch as the amount of cess paid in 1308 B.S. has not been subtracted from the estimated income for 1309 B.S., as was done in previous years. The coal market has come down so low that small firms owned by natives have already begun to disappear, and should it remain stationary, the remaining ones will follow suit and an important native industry will be

RATNAKAR,
Aug. 15th, 1903.

entirely abolished. Government advocating, as it does, free trade, will not come forward to its help by imposing a prohibitive duty on imported coal. If Government withdraws the exorbitant road-cess, allowing only the income tax to remain, it will be a great relief to the coal-mine owners of Bengal.

III.—LEGISLATION.

BHARAT MITRA,
Aug. 8th, 1903.

37. Referring to the Bengal Settled Estates Bill, the *Bharat Mitra* [Calcutta] of the 8th August observes that a zamindar with a modicum of common sense will never subject himself to the provisions of such a law as is proposed in the Bill. He will have to spend one-fourth of his income as stamp-fees when applying to Government for such a settlement. He will lose all his prestige by doing so.

RANGALAY,
Aug. 16th, 1903.

38. We are bound, says the *Rangalaya* [Calcutta] of the 16th August, to support the Bengal Settled Estates Bill on the three following grounds :—

- (1) By preventing the owners of settled estates from becoming suddenly involved in debt it will prevent their zamindaris from being easily ruined. Money-lenders will be slow to advance money to such zamindars.
- (2) The land being the chief source of wealth in this country, it will do a great good by preventing zamindaris from being divided.
- (3) Persons inheriting estates under it will have only a life-interest in them, which will consequently be kept intact without any difficulty. Government will also keep a sharp eye on such zamindars.

Government is to be congratulated on its desire to confer a new right on the Bengal zamindars. But one thing remains to be said. Government says that it will confer this new right on such persons as it pleases, and thus its desire will be paramount in the matter. In every law the will of the Government remains hidden, but in the proposed law it is seen on the surface. The zamindar receives only the privilege of applying for the right, which is really not a great privilege. It would have been much better if Government had made the exercise of the right contingent on the zamindar's having a certain minimum income. The Bill is not explicit on the point of adoption. It does not clearly say what will happen if the widow of a sonless owner of a settled estate adopts a son with his permission. Wherein will the life-estate (interest?) lie—in succession according to primogeniture, or in the interest and ownership of the zamindari? We have nothing to say if the life-interest consists of the privilege sought to be conferred by the Bill. But if it consists of a life-interest in the zamindari, it ought to be opposed. We have nothing to say on the subject of the payment of a fee of a value equivalent to one-fourth of the annual net profits of the settled estate, because such settlements ought to conform to the will of the Sovereign, and also because the fee is not exorbitant.

Again, will the new law apply to the Rajas and zamindars of Bihar, among whom the system of primogeniture is already prevalent? Will they have to apply to the Government for permission to settle their estates in a fixed line? And, if they have to take such permission, will their interest consist of a life-interest only, as provided by the Bill? What will be done with the estates of such zamindars as the Maharaja Bahadur of Burdwan, the Raja of Krishnagar, the Maharaja of Natore, etc.? There are many such minute points which require to be considered in connection with the Bill.

PRATIVASI,
Aug. 17th, 1903.

39. The *Prativasi* [Calcutta] of the 17th August enumerates its objections to the Bengal Settled Estates Bill and remarks as follows :—

The law of primogeniture, if introduced into the zamindar families of Bengal, will be productive of more harm than good. In India the caste system was never dominated by considerations of the possession of wealth. It was either the possession of higher knowledge, or *varna* (lineage), that determined caste. The present attempt to introduce a system of caste based on wealth will therefore be a national calamity. Moreover, Government may hereafter claim that zamindars governed by the

proposed law, had voluntarily given up all their powers over their zamindaris. In that case, the zamindars will become completely dependent upon Government. The younger sons of the zamindars will rebel against their hard lot, and the consequence may be a very serious state of things. Again, if a zamindar, having daughters only, adopts a son, the daughters and their sons will, under the new law, forfeit their shares in the zamindari. In Bihar, where the law of primogeniture prevails, the practice of adoption does not obtain, or where a son is adopted, he is invariably selected from the family of a kinsman.

The object sought to be attained by the proposed law may be a laudable one. What is most objectionable is that too much will depend upon the will of Government. When it is remembered that this will of Government is of the nature of barter and sale, its importance becomes very small indeed. Why should we voluntarily lose the independence we possess? Those who are in possession of hereditary titles may support the Bill. It is not proposed to invest zamindars with administrative powers as in the Muhammadan times; nor are they to be in the least exempted from the all-embracing clutches of the Penal Code; the most objectionable sections of the Bengal Tenancy Act are not to be modified in the new Bill in their favour. There is therefore nothing of importance which the Bill proposes to enact, and we are unable to support it.

IV.—NATIVE STATES.

40. The *Hitavarta* [Calcutta] of the 16th August has the following:—

HITAVARTA,
Aug. 16th, 1903.

The condition of the native Rajas. Almost all native Rajas are heavily involved in debt and unable to meet their expenses, and yet they are called upon to pay subscriptions in aid of a hundred different objects. When the Government, however, finds the treasury of any Raja empty, it brings against him a charge of mismanagement. If he makes an attempt to defend himself against the charge, he is obliged to leave his State and all who are near and dear and come to Benares. Benares has now become an asylum for all deposed Rajas and Maharajas.

41. The same paper says that during the last few years the condition of

HITAVARTA.

The Residents and Political Agents in native States.

the native Rajas and Maharajas has become very critical. It is true that during the Viceroyalty of Lord Dufferin the condition of the native Rajas was bad, but it was not so bad as it is during the present Viceroyalty. This unsatisfactory state of things is not, of course, attributable in all cases to the whimsical disposition of the English officials stationed in the native States, but the manner in which they treat the native Chiefs is far from being statesmanlike and justifiable. In almost all cases relating to the native States it has been seen that the Residents have made a mountain of a molehill. It was something like this which has deprived the Raja of Bilaspur of his State *gudai*. The unfortunate Raja came on pilgrimage to Benares, and on his return to his State found himself deposed. Bilaspur is a very small State. What harm can be apprehended at the hands of an insignificant Chief like the Raja of Bilaspur? It is to be hoped that Lord Curzon will see that no case like this occurs in future.

V.—PROSPECTS OF THE CROPS AND CONDITION OF THE PEOPLE.

42. A correspondent from Nandigram writes to the *Nihar* [Contai] of

NIHAR,
Aug. 18th, 1903.

Distress in the Midnapore district.

the 18th August that in pargana Gumgarh the inhabitants of Gopalchauk, Siruchauk, Ramchauk, Asadtala, Vekutya, Nursinghpur, Sindutya, Balarampur, Panchhaantolla and other villages are in great distress and can hardly manage to get even one meal a day.

The Bhagawanpur correspondent writes as follows:—The inhabitants of Bhagawanpur, Kotnauri, Bananauri and other villages in the Jalamutha pargana are faring most miserably. They are living upon herbs and vege-

PEOPLE AND
PRATIBASI,
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tables. The cultivation of paddy is not satisfactory owing to the failure of the rains. Paddy is selling at Rs. 2 per maund.

43. The *People and Pratibasi* [Calcutta] of the 14th August has the following in its English columns:—

The *Englishman* and the impending famine.

The *Englishman* has got a dangerous optimism. He is welcome to have his own opinion about the material prosperity of the country under the British rule, but it is a matter of surprise to us how our Anglo-Indian contemporary manages to have different opinions about actual facts, such as the abundance or shortage of rainfall in a certain year in a certain locality. The jaundiced eye sees everything coloured, and thus the creed of our contemporary, that under the British rule everything must go straight, leads him to call black white and white black. Every mufassal paper draws the attention of the people to the contingency of a famine in consequence of the unusually short rainfall; there are special reports from every creek and corner of the affected districts, but the *Englishman* will not believe them, and explains them away by a single stroke of the pen as alarmist reports, because they are drawn from non-official sources. For anything to gain the credence of the *Englishman* it must be officially confirmed. Now we fail to understand the over-confidence of the *Englishman* in the official statements so far as the crop reports are concerned. The *Bura sahebs* who perhaps, according to our contemporary, are the only truthful men under the sun and never know what it is to overstate things, do not themselves go to the field and gather the statistics which come to be vested with so much importance when appearing in the *Calcutta Gazette*. It is the natives that are the eyes and ears of the Government so far as the condition of the country is concerned. Who supplied the census figures on which so many disquisitions have come and gone, and which have pointed a moral and adorned a tale to many an Anglo-Indian paper. The District Magistrate did not forego for a few days the pleasure of an early sleep and go the round of the villages to gather correct information about the population of India. He has got it done by his native subordinates, and taken the credit to himself. It is the *chaukidars* and *punchayats* who supply the police outposts with the thousand informations that afterwards appear in the Government Gazettes. So this superstition about the informations of which the source is native, if carried too far, can only result in one's losing all faith in every sort of information, official or non-official. The *Englishman* seeks to give a quietus to the apprehension of the people about an impending famine by inditing this precious little paragraph:—"In view of various alarmist statements made in the native Press, the public generally will be relieved to learn that while there has been a shortage of rain in the western districts of Bengal, there are no official reports to show that agricultural prospects have been seriously affected, and they have been improved by the rain which has since fallen. The assertion that famine conditions exist is totally unfounded."

It is no use trying to meet him by quoting facts and figures. Those facts and figures cannot be believed, because they have the contamination of a native source. But we are not altogether defenceless: there are other Anglo-Indian papers not given to apotheosizing the officials so much. They have independent sources of information, they have not sold themselves to the officials, they are not in the habit of totally ignoring the facts from which no convenient conclusion can be drawn. According to the *Englishman* it is all mere moonshine to say that some districts of Bengal are threatened with an impending famine. But has our contemporary cared to read what the *Indian Daily News* says on the point? We quote it for the enlightenment of our contemporary, though we know full well that the *Englishman* does not keep an open mind in this respect and cannot be convinced against his will:—"In another column we publish some statistics of the distribution of rain in Bengal and Assam which are well calculated to disquiet those who had been hoping that a drought in the province would be averted. The rainfall was deficient in every district, but seriously so in Bihar, where the planters passed through a very trying time. Since the beginning of this month things have taken a more favourable turn, but it is evident that we are not yet out of the wood, and it behoves the District Officers to be in a state of preparedness for any emergency."

44. The same paper says that reports of severe distress are coming from every district. Day-labourers are getting no work. Cultivators are not getting two meals a day. Famine stares the poor people in the face. If Government does not take steps betimes, there will be terrible loss of life in the impending famine. It is therefore hoped that the authorities will not sleep over the matter till hundreds of people have been actually carried off by famine.

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45. The *Hitavadi* [Calcutta] of the 14th August says that distress has become severe at Dattabarutia, Bharatpur, district Murshidabad. Many people are living on vegetables. One man has died of five days' starvation. Severe drought has destroyed all prospects of a paddy crop.

HITAVADI,
Aug. 14th, 1903.

46. The same paper says that distress has become severe in the Ausgram village in the Burdwan district. People are living on vegetables and fruits of the banyan and *aswathwa* trees.

HITAVADI.

47. A correspondent from Bhagawanpur writes to the *Melini Bandhab* [Midnapore] of the 12th August that the under-mentioned people, unable to maintain themselves, have left their native villages:—

MEDINI BANDHAY,
Aug. 12th, 1903.

Thana Nandigram.
Village Lal Chauk. { Kshettra Shaw.
Muchiram Shaw.
Madhab Pal.
Village Gholda. { Krishna Maiti.
Jhatu Das.
Hidu Ghorai.
Raghu Ghosh.
Madhu Palai.
Shibu Ghosh.

Thana Bhagawanpur.
Village Dhanda. { Shibu Maiti.
Kshettra Jana.
Darpur Jana.
Durgi Shit.
Narayan Mandal.
Shibu Mandal.
Rajan Das.

A correspondent from Rohini, a village in thana Gopiballavpur, writes as follows:—

The *naib* of the Maharaja of Mayurbhanja has found it very difficult to realize rent from the raiyats. They are in a most deplorable condition. The *naib*, while out on tour for the collection of rent, summoned one Kokila Bewa, who, while pleading her inability to pay rent, suddenly fell down in a swoon. On enquiry it was found that the poor woman had taken no food for two days except boiled leaves of plants. Such cases are very common. Many women may be seen collecting seeds of grass in the fields.

A correspondent from Chandrakona-Keyagera writes as follows:—

"We have had no rain here worth speaking of. Many families in the village are in distress. Reports reach me of several families who can afford but one meal in 24 hours, and sometimes have to go without that even. It is a woeful tale of misery that I hear from day to day."

A correspondent from Pingla-Kerkai writes that the paddy seedlings are withering away and the raiyats are passing most miserable days.

VI.—MISCELLANEOUS.

48. The *People and Prativasi* [Calcutta] of the 17th August has the following in its English columns:—

PEOPLE AND
PRATIVASI,
Aug. 17th, 1903.

The King-Emperor on the condition of India. It is a pity that even His Majesty the King should be made to walk blindfold over the romantic stories about the condition of India. While His Majesty has declared from the Throne "Agriculture and trade continue to exhibit signs of sustained progress, while the most recent information regarding the present season's rainfall and the promise of crops generally is reassuring," we have to report in our columns that full-fledged famine is once more in our midst. How do these myths about abundant rainfall and the progress of trade and agriculture travel up to the Throne? Is it too much to expect that His Majesty should at least be rightly informed about the state of affairs in India? Are we not

even entitled to the barest justice of being sympathised with and wept for in our distress by our Sovereign?

Is His Majesty to be kept at such a great distance from facts and made to congratulate us on our misfortune and tribulations? It is a strange Government—this Government by proxy, this Government through telegraphic wires and postal despatches. While His Majesty is making a tour of the city of Dublin and visiting the slums to render himself acquainted with the true state of the Irish poor, he has to depend upon fables and myths for enlightenment on the condition of the people in his far off Eastern Dependency. If His Majesty could read with his own eyes the tales of distress to which our Midnapore contemporary has given publicity and of which an English translation has been given in these columns, he could come to know what is the material on which his speech was based worth. The warm heart that has ever throbbed for the poor cannot even send its kind and sympathetic message to these distant shores simply because it is kept in a blessed ignorance about the real state of things here. Our last prayer to the authorities that represent us to the Throne is "Paint us as we are," so that we may have the consolation of being commiserated in our grief.

RANGALAY,
Aug. 16th, 1903.

The Lieutenant-Governor's Private Secretary doing his private work.

49. The *Rangalay* [Calcutta] of the 16th August reproduces the following advertisement from the *Statesman* :—

FOR SALE, ETC.

The property of the Lieutenant-Governor of Bengal.

1. Pair of brown Australian geldings about 6½ and 7½ years old, 16 hands, regularly driven at Delhi Camp. Calcutta price Rs. 2,600.
 2. Pair of chestnut Australian geldings aged 6 years, regularly driven in Calcutta. Height about 16-1 hands. Price Rs. 1,800. Both above pairs believed quite sound, and are thoroughly reliable.
 3. Two sets of double harness to fit above. Price, each set, Rs. 560.
 4. Landau purchased from the Viceroy's Camp after Delhi Durbar and only used a few times since. Price Rs. 1,400.
 5. Landau, recently done up by Steuart & Co., and valued by them at Rs. 1,109.
 6. Brougham in good order, by Dykes, Rs. 703.
 7. Rubber-tyred two-wheeled cart in good order, Rs. 450.
 8. Rickshaw by Dykes, recently done up with rubber pneumatic tyres, Rs. 400.
- If 1 and 4 are taken together the price of turnout, including harness, will be Rs. 4,000.
If 2 and 5 are taken, price of turnout, including harness, will be Rs. 3,000.
Full details, veterinary certificates, etc., may be had by applying to—

E. L. L. HAMMOND, C.S.,

Private Secretary,
Lieutenant-Governor's Camp, Bengal.

The writer then goes on to remark that the above advertisement was certainly not published free of charge, and asks who paid the money, the Hon'ble Mr. Bourdillion or the Government? Is not the Private Secretary, Mr. Hammond, a Government servant? Is he Mr. Bourdillion's private servant? The articles named in the above advertisement are not Government property, but the private property of His Honour. Why should Mr. Hammond, who is a Government servant, do Mr. Bourdillion's private work? It is a rule strictly enforced that no public servant should do the private work of any high official. A District Magistrate will never allow a Deputy Magistrate to order his *chaprasi* to do his own work. The advertisement speaks for itself!

HITAVADI,
Aug. 14th, 1903.

50. Referring to the extension of Lord Curzon's term of office, the *Hitavadi* [Calcutta] of the 14th August says:—

Lord Curzon.

A man can never be above mistakes and entirely faultless, and we do not aver that Lord Curzon is faultless. When we do not get justice, even from native officers of high position, how can we expect an alien governor to satisfy us in all things? Lord Curzon may not be able to satisfy us in all the reforms which he is desirous to make, but great good will be done to the country if a strong and powerful man like him can effect at least some true reforms. It is with this hope in our mind that we express our joy at the extension of Lord Curzon's term of office. And we trust that the last

representative of the late lamented Queen-Empress and the first of the benign Emperor Edward VII will remember the pledge given by himself, resolve to remove the distress of the poor Indians, and return to his country crowned with the glory and the diadem which should belong to a truly beneficent governor.

51. The *Bharat Mitra* [Calcutta] of the 8th August is glad that the Extension of Lord Curzon's tenure of office of His Excellency Lord Curzon is going to be extended by two years.

BHARAT MITRA,
Aug. 8th, 1903.

The balance of the Coronation Fund at Jamalpur.

52. The *Charu Mihir* [Mymensingh] of the 11th August writes that it was proposed to erect a Town Hall, to be called after Emperor Edward VII, at Jamalpur, with the balance of the fund collected at the time of the Coronation. But the Subdivisional Officer of Jamalpur wishes to spend the money in building quarters for the Government Medical Officer of the station. The members of the Coronation Committee and the public are opposed to this proposal. The District Magistrate was appealed to, who said that if the principal subscribers agreed, the money might be spent in the work proposed by the Subdivisional Officer. Considering that the proposed Town Hall is to be associated with the name of His Majesty, and that the money was collected on that understanding, the Subdivisional Officer should not try to act against the wishes of the members of the Coronation Committee.

CHARU MIHIR,
Aug. 11th, 1903.

53. Referring to the extension of Lord Curzon's term of office, the *Jyoti* [Chittagong] of the 13th August remarks as follows:—

JYOTI,
Aug. 13th, 1903.

We have seen what revolutionary changes have taken place in the constitution of the Calcutta Municipality; we have understood the real aim of the Education Commission; we see that before the work of the Police Commission has been even over, crowds of Europeans are being admitted into that department. In the Railway and Telegraph Departments, even posts carrying salaries varying from Rs. 30 to Rs. 40 are about to be given to European youths. Europeans are having the upper hand in all the trades and industries of the country. All these have been the results of Lord Curzon's Viceroyalty. Are we then entitled to hope that His Excellency will henceforward put aside all considerations for the welfare of Englishmen, and take up the cause of the Indians? But as he has given us the assurance that he will devote his best energies to the promoting of India's good, let us hope for the best.

CHUNDER NATH BOSE,
Bengali Translator.

BENGALI TRANSLATOR'S OFFICE,
The 22nd August, 1903.

